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ABSTRACT

The Windber Area School District (Pennsylvania) has combatted "bigness" and impersonality by developing schools-within-a-school, a concept which has particular application for large clusters of grade strata. Although there are several ways to group students, in Windber every two grades (7 through 12) constitute a unit which has its own principal and guidance counselor. Each principal is responsible for his own unit and also has duties toward the overall operation of the school system (maintenance, transportation operation, curriculum, scheduling, federal programs, public relations, etc.). The school plant consists of separate wings for each unit, and common areas accessible for all. Regularly-scheduled meetings between the Board of Education and the various administrative, faculty, and student groups of the school allow for a free flow of communication. A system-wide student council representing all elementary and secondary schools in the district meets with the Superintendent of Schools monthly. A needs assessment procedure is employed to define desired changes in and additions to the school program. A Performance Based Student Achievement Program allows students to acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to obtain entry-level employment not requiring advanced schooling; it includes reading, mathematics, economics, and environmental studies. (CM)

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WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Graham Avenue at 23rd Street
Windber, Pennsylvania 15963

PROGRAMS/MATERIALS CONCERNING EDUCATION WITHIN SMALL SCHOOLS

by

Raymond R. Troxell, Jr.

July 1, 1980

1. Schools Within a School
2. Communications Device entitled Councils and Committees
3. District-Wide Student Council Concept
4. Needs Assessment System
5. Performance Based Student Achievement System

RC 012641

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ADMINISTRATION

One way of combating "bigness" and the impersonal feeling of students that has been created by our (Gr. 7-12) population is to develop and expand the idea known as Schools-Within-A-School. This idea has been utilized in several public school districts and it has particular application for large clusters of grade strata.

If there will be 900 students in Grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, they could be organized into three units of about 300 students each. Each unit or school would have its own administrator who would be responsible for all the functions of that unit. Each principal would also have certain other duties and responsibilities toward the overall operation of the school system.

The other responsibilities that will be distributed among the three principals are things like maintenance, transportation operation, curriculum, scheduling, federal programs, public relations, etc. Everyone working in the total secondary complex will be responsible to one of the three principals. The three principals will be responsible to the Superintendent of Schools.

Each grade will have a guidance counselor or share a guidance counselor who will be responsible for the same group of students while they are attending the school. The counselor will ideally move from grade to grade each year as his group of students moves from grade to grade. Thus, each counselor will be responsible to a different principal each year.

There are several ways to group the students within each unit; however in our situation every two grades will constitute a unit.

For the school-within-a-school concept to function efficiently the school plant will have separate wings or sections for each unit with common areas that are easily accessible for all. The common areas will include the administrative offices, the auditorium, the health unit, the cafeteria, the supply and distribution center, the audio visual center, the IMC, and the physical education, industrial arts, music, home economics, and art facilities.

GRADE LEVEL RESPONSIBILITIES - PRINCIPALS

A. Administrative Units

The student wings provided for Grades 7 to 12 will operate as three separate administrative units within the school itself. The following policies shall govern the operation of the three administrative units.

1. Each grade level administrative unit shall have its own principal.

2. Each grade level administrative unit shall have one guidance counselor and a secretary.

3. The three grade-level administrators will serve under the Superintendent of Schools who shall have responsibility for the operation of the total school program. Grade level principals will be immediately responsible to him for the proper operation of their grade level units.

ADMINISTRATION (continued)

4. In addition to their duties as grade principals, each grade level administrator shall have certain duties which shall pertain to the operation of the school as a whole. These duties shall be determined by the Superintendent of Schools, and shall be assigned accordingly. Said duties shall henceforth be referred to as "school responsibilities," as contrasted to "grade level responsibilities," which shall be the term used to define the duties of the principals in their capacities as grade level principals.

B. Grade Level Responsibilities

Each principal in charge of a particular grade level shall have the following general responsibilities and duties within his own administrative area.

1. Teacher Supervision

   a. Each grade level principal shall observe each of his teachers at frequent intervals and submit a report on each teacher to the Superintendent of Schools every two months.

2. Discipline

   a. Each grade level principal shall be responsible for the conduct of his pupils at all times. As an example, a 7th grade pupil who has become a disciplinary problem in a specialized school area such as the cafeteria shall be sent to the 7th grade principal's office for disciplinary action.

   b. Each grade principal shall maintain his own detention hall and assign teacher proctors as needed.

   c. Important: Serious disciplinary infractions meriting immediate pupil-suspension, such as insubordination, vandalism, etc., shall be referred to the Superintendent of Schools.

   d. Students may not be dropped from classes because of disciplinary problems without the approval of the appropriate grade level principal.

3. Curriculum

   a. Grade principals are responsible for seeing that the prescribed curricular program is followed at their grade levels.

   b. Grade principals are responsible for evaluation, curriculum, revision of courses of study, guidelines for new programs, and selection of new textbooks.

JUL 1 19[illegible]

ADMINISTRATION (continued)

4. Attendance

   a. Each grade principal shall see that an accounting is made of students absent and present during the homeroom period each morning. The individual grade level secretaries shall maintain an accounting of each pupil's absences. At the beginning of the first period names of absentees shall be forwarded to the 7/8 grade office to be included on a bulletin which will be distributed to all classes during the 4th module.

   b. Grade level secretaries or designated student secretaries shall call each absentee's home during the day to determine the cause of absence.

   c. A secretary, 7/8 grade level, shall be designated to make the necessary pupil-accounting reports to the Superintendent of Schools as these become due.

   d. Students entering or dropping from school shall report to the 7/8 grade level office for final processing.

5. Building Maintenance

   a. Grade level principals will be responsible for the cleanliness and upkeep of their particular area of the building. The 9/10 grade level administrator will instruct the head janitor as to steps to be taken to correct the situation.

   b. It is the intention of the administration to keep the condition of the grounds and buildings immaculate at all times. To this end, the student council will designate a different homeroom as responsible for helping to keep the building and grounds free of paper, etc., each week of the school year.

6. Teacher Supplies

   a. Teachers will order their quarterly supplies from the grade level principal to whom they have been assigned. Grade level principals will see that these orders are filled.

   b. Upon notification, grade level principals will make out their supply order for their administrative unit for the ensuing school year. Supplies for each grade level will be kept in the central processing and storage area.

JUL 1 1980

ADMINISTRATION (continued)

c. The 7th and 8th grade principal, upon receiving orders from the other individual grade principals, will combine these orders with other specialized ones, make out the requisition for the entire school and supply same.

7. Book Storage and Requisitions

a. Grade level principals will be responsible to see that each teacher has an adequate supply of textbooks for each of his classes. In every case possible, the books to be used by a certain teacher for a certain class will be stored in the wall bookcases in the rooms.

For those books, such as literature, which it will be impossible to store within a particular classroom, book storage areas will be available in each unit. The 7th and 8th grade principal will be responsible for seeing to it that books which are usually used at a certain grade level are stored in that unit. The 7th and 8th grade level principal's secretary will keep an accurate account of the whereabouts of books stored and in use in the buildings. Teachers wishing to requisition books in storage for use in their classrooms must do so by noon on Friday before the week in which they plan to make use of the books. They should make the requisition out to their grade level principal's secretary. The secretary will fill the orders during the last period on Friday, using student or janitorial help.

b. Upon notification from the Superintendent of Schools, department heads will make out textbook requisitions for their departments for the ensuing school year. The 7th and 8th grade principal will combine these orders for the entire school and submit them to the Superintendent of Schools.

8. Specialized Grade Level Duties

Each grade principal will have particular duties and responsibilities common only to his grade level. For example, the following are some of the specialized duties of the 11th and 12th grade principal:

a. See that all students' transcripts are processed and forwarded. (It is the responsibility of the 11th and 12th grade principal to get to know the capabilities, achievements, background, and interests of each class member as thoroughly as possible, as school recommendations are becoming increasingly important in the eyes of everyone. In writing recommendations, the 11th and 12th grade principal will utilize the services of the 11th and 12th grade counselors.)

JUL 1 1980

ADMINISTRATION (continued)

b. Plan for and supervise all class activities.

c. Review students' records to see that each has taken required courses and has sufficient credits.

d. Maintain a check on students who are failing subjects.

e. The 11th and 12th grade principal will have all other responsibilities having to do with the class. The grade level principals will have different but equally important duties which are common to their grade levels, such as securing substitutes for their grade level teachers and scheduling assemblies. It is the responsibility of the grade level principals to see that these specialized duties are carried out as effectively as possible.

Rules adopted:

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Windber, Pennsylvania

JUL 1 1980

SCHOOL-WIDE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRINCIPALS

In addition to his grade level responsibilities, each principal shall have certain duties which pertain to the operation of the overall secondary school program. In carrying out these duties on a school-wide basis, principals will be given authority commensurate with their responsibilities. Such authority shall be delegated to them, and the principals will be responsible to the Superintendent of Schools for the successful carrying out of these duties and responsibilities.

A. School Responsibilities of the 11th and 12th Grade Principal

1. The 11th and 12th grade principal shall be responsible for making out the school's master schedule, and for all matters having to do with scheduling, such as seeing to it that students' individual schedule cards have been filled out by the guidance counselors by the end of March, prior to the making of the master schedule; the determination of the number of teachers and sections needed per subject; the assigning of students to homerooms; and the making out of class lists for each teacher prior to the opening of school in the fall, etc.

2. In the development of the master schedule, the 11th and 12th grade principal shall consult frequently with the Superintendent of Schools in order to insure that school policy is being followed in regard to such matters as pupil grouping, and that specialized areas such as shop areas and seminar rooms are available at the proper time for those teachers expected to utilize them.

3. The 11th and 12th grade principal shall also be responsible for any changes in the daily schedule, temporary or otherwise. This responsibility shall include such things as adjusting the bell schedule to shorten or lengthen periods on an assembly day, and seeing to it that student movement to and from a specialized area such as the auditorium is accomplished expeditiously.

4. The 11th and 12th grade principal shall be responsible for the entire program of interscholastic athletics as well as the entire intramural program.

5. The 11th and 12th grade principal shall be responsible for the issuance of all working papers.

6. The 11th and 12th grade principal shall have primary responsibility for the supervision of the Instructional Media Center. In the carrying out of his duties in this area, he shall work closely with the Librarians.

The 11th and 12th grade principal will assume other duties and responsibilities as they are delegated to him by the Superintendent.

JUL 1 1980

SCHOOL-WIDE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRINCIPALS (continued)

B. School Responsibilities of the 9th and 10th Grade Principal

1. The 9th and 10th grade principal will be responsible for the cleanliness and maintenance of all buildings. He will make frequent inspection of halls, classrooms, lavatories, and grounds, and confer frequently with the maintenance supervisors as to building conditions. He will see to it that janitors perform their duties as required.

2. The 9th and 10th grade principal will be responsible for seeing that proper precautions are taken throughout the building and on school grounds for student safety and well-being. He will see to it that fire fighting equipment is kept in good order, and will, under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, conduct fire drills and civil defense drills at various times throughout the year.

3. The 9th and 10th grade principal shall be responsible for rentals of all facilities in the Windber Area School District.

4. The 9th and 10th grade principal shall assume responsibility for public relations and transportation.

5. The 9th and 10th grade principal shall be completely involved with the mechanics and makeup of the Master Schedule.

The 9th and 10th grade principal will assume other duties and responsibilities as they are delegated to him by the Superintendent.

C. School Responsibilities of the 7th and 8th Grade Principal

1. The 7th and 8th grade principal shall be responsible for the proper functioning of the school cafeterias, and shall see to it that a high level of student behavior is maintained at all times.

2. The 7th and 8th grade principal shall be responsible for the placement of textbooks throughout the buildings, and the inventory of same. In the spring he will see that the various department heads submit the necessary textbook orders for the ensuing year, and combine these into the total order for the school and submit this to the Superintendent of Schools. The 7th and 8th grade principal's secretary shall check all books received, and see that they are distributed to the proper locations throughout the secondary school complex by the janitorial staff.

JUL 1 1980

SCHOOL-WIDE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRINCIPALS (continued)

The 7th and 8th grade principal will also have responsibility for the ordering of all cooperative tests used for final examinations.

3. The 7th and 8th grade principal shall have the responsibility for combining the school's supply order (annual), and submitting it to central administration. The 7th and 8th grade principal's secretary shall check all supplies received and see that they are distributed to proper locations throughout the secondary school complex by the janitorial staff.

4. The 7th and 8th grade principal shall have the responsibility for coordinating and reporting the overall attendance program.

5. The 7th and 8th grade principal shall act as the school district's (K-12) Home and School Visitor.

6. The 7th and 8th grade principal shall be completely involved with the mechanics and makeup of the Master Schedule.

7. The 7th and 8th grade principal shall assume responsibility for the Federal Programs.

The 7th and 8th grade principal will assume other duties and responsibilities as they are delegated to him by the Superintendent.

In addition, the principal of the West End Elementary School shall have the responsibility for all In-Service Programs, the School District Census, and E.A.Q.; whereas the principal of the Maple Drive and East End Elementary School shall have the responsibility for pupil personnel, personnel, and act as liaison with the Intermediate Unit.

The elementary principals shall assume other duties and responsibilities as they are delegated to them by the Superintendent.

Rules adopted:

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Windber, Pennsylvania

JUL 1 1980

Administration

Councils and Committees

In the development of rules, regulations, and arrangements for the operation of the school system, the Board of Education should include at the planning stage whenever feasible those employees who will be affected by such provisions.

The Board of Education should evolve with professional and nonprofessional employees channels for the ready intercommunication of ideas and feelings regarding the operation of the schools. The board shall weigh with care the counsel given by employees, especially that given by groups designated to represent large segments of the staff.

Regularly scheduled meetings between the Board of Education and the various administrative, faculty and student groups of the school system allow for a free flow of communication among the participants. They provide an instrument through which suggestions and/or complaints can flow upward and the answers to questions can be derived by the various groups. It provides opportunities for the Board of Education to gather information, discuss problem areas, and issue directives which will enable the school district to move forward with singleness of purpose in striving toward its educational goals and objectives.

Revised Policy adopted:

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Windber, Pennsylvania

JUL 1 1980

Administration

Councils and Committees

Administrative Meetings

The following scheduled meetings will be adhered to as closely as possible although occasional changing of dates will be necessary:

Meeting Dates, Times, and Personnel Scheduled to Attend

1. Business, Maintenance, Transportation

   9:30 - First and third Tuesday of every month throughout the year - Conference Room.

   Personnel scheduled to attend - Superintendent
   Secondary Principals
   Bookkeeper(s)
   Supervisors of Buildings and Grounds
   Cafeteria Supervisor

2. Administrative Meetings

   9:30 - First and third Wednesday of each month throughout the year - Conference Room

   Personnel scheduled to attend - Superintendent
   Secondary Principals
   Elementary Principal
   Administrative Assistant
   Director of Educational Services
   ESEA Title I Coordinator

3. Teachers' Association

   2:30 - First Wednesday of each month throughout the year - Conference Room

   Personnel scheduled to attend - Superintendent
   President and Vice-President
   of Teachers' Association

JUL 1 1980

Councils and Committees (continued)

4. Departmental Chairmen's Meeting - Second Thursday of each month

   Personnel scheduled to attend - Superintendent
   Director of Educational Services
   Curriculum Coordinators
   Principals

5. District Student Council - Second Wednesday of each month (Except Sept.) 1:00 P.M.

6. Athletic Advisory Council - Third Wednesday of each month throughout the year - 2:30 P.M. in the Conference Room

   Personnel scheduled to attend - Superintendent
   High School Principal
   Athletic Director
   One of the Head Coaches

Rules approved: JUL 1 1980

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Windber, Pennsylvania

Administration

System Wide Student Council

The Windber Area School District has established a "system wide student council" that shall be a formal mechanism for social interaction and communication between central administration and the student body.

The student council shall be a composite of representation of each elementary and secondary school in the Windber Area School District and shall meet with the Superintendent of Schools on the second Wednesday of each month.

These student council meetings shall be planned to provide a forum for the expression of student opinion, to develop harmonious relations between students and faculty, to promote the welfare of the entire school district, and to develop initiative and responsibility in the total school system.

Policy adopted:

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Windber, Pennsylvania

JUL 1 1990

Administration

Membership : System Wide Student Council

Each building will elect representatives to meet monthly with the Superintendent "to discuss problems which concern them in their everyday lives." In addition, the council will become involved in the decision-making process.

The elections will be concluded by October 1 in the individual buildings.

The council members will meet in the office of the Superintendent of Schools on the second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 P.M.

Representation shall be based upon the following:

Hoffman Avenue	2 members
East End	2 members
West End	2 members
Maple Drive	2 members
7th, 8th, and 9th grade	3 members
10th, 11th, and 12th grade	3 members

Rules approved: JUL 1 1980

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Windber, Pennsylvania

Administration

Research, Evaluation, Planning, Accountability

Needs Assessment

Any effective program that is proposed for adoption must be preceded by an analysis of district needs.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT is a process defining the desired end of a given sequence of development. Needs assessment is a process making specific, in some intelligible manner, what schooling should be about and how it can be assessed. It is not, by itself, innovative, but it is a method for determining if change is necessary and/or desirable.

Needs assessment is an empirical process for defining the outcomes of education, and as such it is then a set of criteria by which any aspect of school management and the instructional program may be developed and compared. Needs assessment is a tool which formally harvests the gaps between current results (or outcomes, products) and required or desired results, places those gaps in priority order and selects those gaps (needs) of the highest priority for action, usually through implementation of a new or existing management process.

Recognizing the importance of the needs assessment process in accomplishing the smooth and efficient operation of the school district, the Windber Area School District Board of Education commits itself to the implementation of a needs assessment procedure for all proposed changes in and any proposed additions, to the total school program for which there is a fiscal expenditure required.

The responsible administrator shall personally complete the proper rationale and submit such to the Superintendent of Schools and then to the Curriculum Committee for consideration. The Board of Education will not, under any circumstances act upon any program change, which is not accompained by a needs assessment rationale.

JUL 1 1980

Development of Program Components
Assessment Needs

	Observation of Discrepancies		
Grade or Level Served	Existing Condition (What Is)	Goal or desired condition (What should be)	Discrepancy (What the difference is)

Program Description

Analysis of Discrepancy	Program Objective	Major Solution Procedures (Activities) (Fiscal Implications)	Event Schedule (This is to be by the month)

Revised rules approved:

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Windber, Pennsylvania

JUL 1 1980

Instruction

Performance Based Student Achievement

A traditional and continuing purpose of the public schools is to help all individuals develop the skills and the competencies needed to hold a job. Many students are not given this help when the curriculum narrowly focuses on academic preparation. Moreover, the motivating factor for learning, present in considerations of a career, is absent when only the academic side of the curriculum is highlighted. Hence, the Performance Based Student Achievement Program will emphasize:

that all persons who leave the formal schooling process are equipped to participate constructively in the economic life of the nation;

that every student will be able to seek and obtain an entry job of his choice;

that all students will relate their work to their sense of personal happiness and worth; and

that all students will understand the relationship between school and work.

The Windber Area School District will assist all students in developing competencies required to seek and maintain gainful employment. To this end, programs will be established to allow students to acquire the skills, knowledges, and attitudes necessary to obtain entry-level employment not requiring advanced schooling.

Primary-level instructional materials used in teaching reading shall emphasize the broad field of work. Instructional personnel will be encouraged to infuse daily teaching with examples from the world of work. The administration shall devise a plan for helping all teachers secure appropriate work information from employee-employer groups.

Exploratory career education experiences will be an intregal part of the middle grades curriculum for both boys and girls. Opportunities and experiences shall cover as many of the families of occupations as possible. Extensive ties shall be made between the basic education program and the career education program.

The high school career education program will be based upon a career cluster pattern whereby students may develop competencies to serve a family of occupations rather than early job specialization. The high school program shall be comprehensive to provide opportunities for all students.

The staff will actively cooperate with nearby high schools, colleges, vocational schools, government agencies, and business and industry in career education programs.

Performance Based Student Achievement (continued)

High school graduation requirements are currently stated in terms of exposure to curricular areas rather than in terms of the competencies and individual requires to survive and contribute in modern society. Hence, the Performance Based Student Achievement Program will:

require students to perform certain real-life survival competencies; and

link required academic courses to these real-life survival competencies.

Two key elements in the process will be the identification of the competencies young people need to succeed as adults and the development of new ways to use community resources in conjunction with those of the school in order to help students achieve those competencies.

It is important to note that competencies as defined in the program include knowledge and values as well as skills.

For a variety of reasons a substantial number of people of all ages are unable to read at a level necessary to pursue their intellectual and personal interests as well as their social and economic development. In addition to those who cannot read at all, there is an unknown number who are functional illiterates. It is a fundamental purpose of schooling:

to produce citizens who can read;

to provide continuity in the reading process;

to require diagnostic procedures that determine the skill development level of each student and list gaps between student entry level and performance targets;

to prescribe and file for review and feedback, a program to eliminate individual student performance gaps;

to develop each student's reading ability to the highest level of proficiency and to be able to perform adult reading tasks at all levels of difficulty and required performance; and

to strengthen the family capability to teach and augment the reading instruction of the school.

The system will emphasize the preventive rather than the remedial aspects of the reading program. The superintendent will develop a procedure to identify poor readers, and to find out the effectiveness of current instruction in reducing the number of poor readers, and report the results.

Performance Based Student Achievement - (continued)

The Windber Area School District will provide all students with the required skills, knowledge, and attitudes to be able to read at least to survival levels. To do this the system will identify instructional objectives, translate those objectives into performance targets, and continuously evaluate the effectiveness of instruction in reducing the pool of nonreaders or poor readers and in building the pool of good and excellent readers. Instructional objectives will be based upon reading requirements in both school and society.

Priority attention will be given to the teaching of reading in the primary grades.

Facility with numbers and quantitative thinking are also prime requisites for successful adulthood in our complex and rich society. Hence, the Performance Based Student Achievement Program will:

develop as high a competence as possible for each learner; and

demonstrate for each learner the social requirement of competence in quantitative thinking.

The system will identify the arithmetic skill level of each student through diagnostic procedures. After diagnosis the instructional staff will determine and implement the appropriate educational program to ensure that the student will move from current performance levels to the next performance target in the shortest possible time.

The mathematics program will be related as closely as possible to real world situations. Students, at appropriate age levels, should be able to perform such tasks as compute interest rates, figure miles per gallon of gas, and balance a bank checkbook or complete an income tax form accurately.

The high school mathematics program will not only be appropriate to competence levels, but also appropriate to the career goals of each student.

Each student's list of accomplishments in mathematics will be on file with the appropriate teacher. The criteria used to measure this performance will be listed. Each year the performance of each student will be reported in terms of his goals and objectives.

The increasing complexity of both personal and public economic affairs requires that in grades K-12, schools cannot leave to chance student acquisition of economic knowledge and understanding. Instruction must be provided to ensure that students become acquainted with economic facts and principles.

Performance Based Student Achievement - (continued)

Hence, the Performance Based Student Achievement Program will develop competencies in consumerism and citizenship in the economic life of the community and nation.

Economic education will also be stressed at all grade levels through the development of teaching strategies appropriate to the maturity of the student.

Further, performance objectives in economics will be developed for each student.

Concern for the quality of life and the safeguarding of our natural resources has reached an all-time high. There is no subject more important in the curriculum. Harmony with, and even celebration of, our world is essential for our survival. Hence, the Performance Based Student Achievement Program will:

develop a continuing program of environmental education; and

make environmental concerns an integral part of all courses.

The school system will also develop and maintain a systematic instructional program in environmental education.

Environmental studies will be coordinated with other learning experiences such as: physical science, social sciences, and language arts. The plan will outline the minimum competencies students need to deal wisely with the environment.

The administration will also prepare, keep current, and disseminate a list of the competencies that are necessary in the career clusters.

Further, all curricular areas will prepare the student for the role of the life-long learner presenting the student those facets in each particular curricular area from which the student can choose an avocation in an ever changing society.

As our society gets even more complex it is important that everyone learn that what is made by man can be understood and controlled by man.

Policy adopted: JUL 1 1980

WINDBER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Windber, Pennsylvania